NWS Meteorologists Conduct Training Workshops in Egypt

NWS Science and Operations Officer, Charlie Paxton, from Tampa, Florida, joined meteorologists Brandt Maxwell, forecaster from San Diego, California; and Terry Onsager, Saudi Arabia Program Analyst from the International Activities Office to conduct training in Cairo, Egypt. The training was conducted at the Egyptian Meteorological Authority (EMA) - World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Training Center from 25 Jan 2010 through 5 Feb 2010. The focus of the training was for implementation of the Weather Research and Forecast Environmental Computer Modeling System (WRF EMS).

Charlie Paxton, Brandt Maxwell, and Terry Onsager in front of the Pyramid of Menkaura.

The NWS meteorologists held two workshops focused on training meteorologists to install, configure, run, and visualize the WRF EMS. The team arrived in Egypt several days early to meet the EMA staff and set up the computers used for training. The IT staff was helpful in tailoring the computers for the specific training requirements. The EMA training facilities were first rate, including Linux computers in the training room and a large conference room. The workshops blended classroom and hands-on instruction.

Students and staff from the first workshop.

The first workshop (31 Jan-2 Feb) was held for 15 EMA meteorologists and IT staff and two meteorologists from Yemen. The second workshop (3-4 Feb) was held for meteorologists from Arab League nations over a two day period. The Arab League meteorologists came from the following countries: Morocco, Bahrain, UAE, Yemen, Sudan, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Egypt. The workshops were a resounding success with a high level of enthusiasm for the use of the WRF EMS for high-resolution mesoscale modeling throughout the region.

Hands on training during the first workshop.

Participation in these workshops will benefit the National Weather Service in several areas. First, modelers from the workshop were very interested in collaborating with WRF model experts on aviation, dust storm, and air pollution modeling that could bring benefits to all. Two of the meteorologists even offered to contribute code for cumulus and radiative-transfer parameterizations of the model. Second, the training material for the WRF EMS will be improved due to questions and feedback from the participants in the workshops, as many unexpected and often difficult questions were asked during the workshop exercises. Third, feedback could be given to the developers of the WRF EMS based on performance (both strengths and weaknesses) of the model during various meteorological scenarios.

Arab League meteorologists and staff from the second workshop.